

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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Initiative Focuses on Community Input to Improve the Health of County Residents

San Bernardino: On September 23, 2011 over fifty community leaders gathered at the Behavioral Health Resource Center in Rialto for the inaugural meeting of the Community Vital Signs Initiative.

The Community Vital Signs Initiative builds upon the County Vision Plan and is an effort spearheaded by San Bernardino County Departments of Public Health, Behavioral Health, and Arrowhead Medical Center. The day-long workshop was the first phase of an on-going effort to empower the community to set goals and objectives, as well as develop a strategic plan that guides policy to improve the quality of health for all San Bernardino County residents.

"I ask the community to collaborate with our County departments on this long-term strategic plan that will redefine how we address the health issues impacting our region," said Supervisor and Chair Josie Gonzales, who represents San Bernardino County's Fifth District. "Rarely do opportunities like this arise, bringing community and faith-based groups, among others, together to contribute in the drafting of a final regional design," she added.

Other participants included the Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP), El Sol Neighborhood Education Center, Inland Empire HIV Planning Council, Goodwill Southern California, University of California, Riverside, African American Health Institute, Loma Linda University, Kaiser Permanente, Latino Health Collaborative, and several other community and faith based organizations, hospitals, representatives from cities and towns, and elected officials from San Bernardino County.

The next step for the Community Vital Signs Initiative will be to finalize the Mission and Value statements. In addition, the group will identify additional community sectors vital to developing a long-term plan to improve the health of County residents.

The second workshop scheduled for January 2012, will finalize the structure, appoint regional stakeholders, and cultural brokers to serve on a steering committee for the Community Vital Signs Initiative. The steering committee will provide immediate and long-term direction for the Initiative.

For information about Community Vital Signs Initiative call the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health at **1 (800) 782-4264**.

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